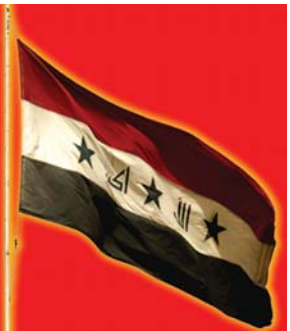




THIS WEEK IN IRAQ



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*Nice to
meet
you, sir*

Spc. Nathan K. Edwards, 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, shakes the hand of a small boy during a cordon and search mission in Tall Afar.

U.S. Army photo by Pfc. James Wilt

'Iron Fist' pounds insurgents

By 2nd Marine Division
Public Affairs

CAMP BLUE DIAMOND, AR RAMADI — The first day of Operation Kabda Bil Hadid (Iron Fist) saw several successful engagements against Al Qaeda terrorists operating in and around Sa'dah, approximately seven miles east of the Syrian border Oct. 1. The operation continues with a force of approximately 1,000 Marines, Soldiers and Sailors from Regimental Combat Team-2.

Coalition Forces, including helicopters from 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, engaged and killed eight armed terrorists in fighting early in the day.

During another engagement, insurgents

drove two vehicles in the vicinity of a Marine position, dismounted and began to attack with small-arms fire. One of the vehicles was found to be rigged with explosives. The gun battle left four terrorists dead. The fifth surrendered to the Marines.

In the late morning, Marines discovered and destroyed a roadside bomb on the outskirts of Sa'dah. Shortly afterward, an M1A1 Main Battle Tank destroyed a vehicle car bomb with one round from its main gun southwest of the city. North of Sa'dah, U.S. Forces killed three al Qaeda in Iraq terrorists after the group attacked their checkpoint with small-arms fire.

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Progress being made daily leads to success

By Gen. George W. Casey Jr.
Multi-National Force - Iraq Commanding General

Last week I testified before the U.S. Congress on the status of operations here in Iraq. Tough, realistic answers were provided to the questions from the American politicians whose Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines are in the fight. In general, let me recap my testimony.

First, we have crafted a strategy for success in Iraq based on historical lessons, established counterinsurgency principles and the realities on the ground in Iraq. Iraqi security forces are progressing and continuing to take a more prominent role in defending their country. For example, we have two brigades and about eight battalions in Baghdad right now taking on the security mission. It is part of the plan and will be more progressive around the country as local and security forces become more and more ready.

Second, the issue of Iraqi unit readiness came up during the hearings. Readiness fluctuates almost daily based on the level of support needed to conduct operations from the Coalition. At this moment the exact readiness level is less important than the number of Iraqi units we have engaging the enemy. In May there were only about 160 combined and independent Iraqi operations at the company level (operations involving about 100 Soldiers). As of September the number is up to 1,300 operations. Iraqi units are coming on line and are in the fight with the Coalition every day.

Finally, the issue of troop reductions came up. While there is no timeline, condition-based reductions of Coalition Forces is still very much a part of our overall counterinsurgency strategy. Expect to see condition-based reductions in 2006.

In summary, we have a plan and are making progress every day in Iraq. While the insurgents will try, they will not stop the political process from going forward because we are more relentless in our progress than those who are trying to disrupt us.



Gen. George W. Casey Jr.



Workers help distribute some of the 228 metric tons of flour, 177 tons of sugar, 98 tons of cooking oil and 210 tons of rice to Iraqis in Tall Afar and outlying areas.

Iraqi government sends aid to Tall Afar residents

By Multi-National Force-
Northwest Public Affairs

MOSUL — The Iraqi government provided over 700 metric tons of food to families recently in Tall Afar. Following successful combat operations in the town the government responded to citizen's needs.

The governor of Ninevah province, Duraid Kashmoula and the Mayor of Tall Afar, Najim Abdullah Al Jabori coordinated shipments of food to be distributed to families in Tall Afar and outlying towns. Shipments were delivered over a two-week period starting Sept. 16 by the Ministry of Transportation and included 228 metric tons of flour, 177 tons of sugar, 98 tons of cooking oil and 210 tons of rice.



A family receives humanitarian aid in Tall Afar.

Since the humanitarian effort started 1,521 families (9,894 people) have received food in Tall Afar and outlying towns. This humanitarian assistance represents the government's commitment to the safety, security and well-being of Tall Afar residents.

Iraqi Security forces supported by Multi-National Forces continue successful operations aimed at capturing or killing terrorists in an effort to provide safety and security to the citizens of the region.

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Operation River Gate pursues al Qaeda in Iraq

By 2nd Marine Division
Public Affairs

CAMP BLUE DIAMOND, AR RAMADI — The 2nd Marine Division launched Operation Bawwabatu Annaher (River Gate) in the cities of Haditha, Haqlaniyah and Barwana yesterday.

Approximately 2,500 Marines, Soldiers and Sailors from Regimental Combat Team-2 and Iraqi Security

Force Soldiers are participating in the operation, making it the largest operation in the Al Anbar province this year.

The operation's goal is to deny al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) the ability to operate in the three Euphrates River Valley cities and to free the local citizens from the insurgents' campaign of murder and intimidation of innocent women, children and men.

Haditha is an important

crossroads for AQI's smuggling activities from the Syrian border. Once in Haditha, smugglers can go north to Mosul or continue on to Ar Ramadi, Fallujah or Baghdad. The city is home to approximately 75,000 Iraqis, a vital hydroelectric power plant and 28 schools.

Coalition and Iraqi Forces located in western Al Anbar province have seen a recent increase of AQI violence in

Haditha. Last spring, insurgents attacked Haditha General Hospital, the largest in western Al Anbar, with a suicide car bomb, destroying more than half of the building with the explosion and ensuing fire.

Insurgents also established fortified firing positions inside the hospital and used patients and staff as human shields as they attacked Marines from the hospital and later retreated from the Marine counterattack.

Iron Fist

from page 1

The eighth insurgent was killed when an AH-1W Super Cobra helicopter destroyed a vehicle after its driver fired on a Marine position with a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG). Another vehicle traveling with the attacker was seen to be carrying additional RPGs and was subsequently destroyed by missile fire from the Cobra. The driver and passenger escaped the blast.

No Marine casualties have been reported.

The goal of the operation is to root out al Qaeda in Iraq terrorists operating within the area and disrupting insurgent support systems in and around Sa'dah.

The offensive is part of an overall operation called Sayaid (Hunter), which is intended to deny al Qaeda in Iraq the ability to operate freely in the Euphrates River Valley and to prevent the terrorists from influencing the local population through murder and intimidation.

Liberty Soldiers support referendum

By Capt. Monte Hibbert
116th Brigade Combat Team

TIKRIT — Iraqi security and Task Force Liberty leaders met Sept. 21 at the Iraqi Army's K1 training and headquarters facility near Kirkuk to rehearse security plans for the Oct. 15 constitutional referendum election.

Organizations represented at the security plan rehearsal included the Iraqi Army leaders of the 2nd Brigade, 4th Division, Iraqi Police Services, Independent Electoral Commission - Iraq (IECI), Iraqi emergency services and Soldiers of the 116th Brigade Combat Team.

The rehearsal included a military-style "rock drill" where each participant rehearsed the plan using a large graphical representation of the area laid out on an auditorium floor.

Sgt. Maj. Ken Ahlm, operations sergeant for the 116th BCT, and several other 116th BCT operations and staff Soldiers assisted



116th BCT Operations Soldiers Sgt. Maj. Ken Ahlm (left) and Spc. Charles Brown help an Iraqi Army operations officer set up a terrain map in preparation for a referendum vote security rehearsal.

the Iraqis in setting up the floor map depicting the region.

Ensuring that the upcoming referendum vote is not interrupted by violence is a top priority for both the Iraqi and Task Force Liberty forces.

This exercise offered an opportunity for key leaders to synchronize their efforts to ensure seamless security.

Tip foils attack, raids net 11

BAGHDAD — Task Force Baghdad Soldiers, acting on a tip from an Iraqi citizen, captured seven suspected terrorists and discovered three improvised explosive devices (IEDs) Sept. 26.

After receiving the tip that a large bomb was buried beneath a road in south Baghdad, Soldiers from 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment investigated the area and discovered exposed wires leading from the suspected bomb site to a nearby house.

The unit raided the house, seized the suspects and found a series of linked roadside bombs at the site. The largest of the three bombs contained more than 200 pounds of homemade explosives. An explosives ordnance disposal team was called in and conducted controlled detonations on the explosives and artillery rounds.

"The tip ... was essential to the success of the mission," said Maj. Raul Benitez, 4th Brigade Combat Team intelligence officer.

In other combat operations, more than 100 Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment conducted an air and ground assault in south Baghdad.

The unit searched three different objectives during the assault, captured four terror suspects and seized bomb-making materials, detonation cord, blasting caps and electrical wire.

Coalition troops help rebuild Iraqi healthcare

**Story and photos by
Lt. Cdr. Bartosz Zajda
MND-CS Public Information Office**

AD DIWANIYAH — Medicines worth \$500,000 have been donated to Iraqi hospitals in Ad Diwaniyah. The medicines are designated to the hospital specialist treatment. The donation was organized by the Multi-National Division Central-South (MND-CS) through its humanitarian assistance activities.

Among the many different types of the medical supplies donated, the most important are antibiotics to counter inflammations, anti-depressants, bandages, surgical gloves, tracheotomy equipment and others. In total 160 packets of medicines. All

the medicines were sponsored by American humanitarian organization "The Freedom and Peace Trust." Additionally "Doctors Without Borders" organization donated medical books for Iraqi doctors.

Dr. Hameed J. Al-Shwely, Department of Health Director, Ad Diwaniyah, said, "Thanks to your help we will be able to help our compatriots."

Humanitarian assistance actions are the essential part of MND-CS activities. The Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Centre (HACC) is responsible for the organization of humanitarian actions. In the last weeks



Medicines worth \$500,000 have been donated to Iraqi hospitals in Ad Diwaniyah by MND-CS through its humanitarian assistance activities.

HACC organized the donations of wheelchairs for disabled children, school supplies, footwear, clothing and food products for Iraqis.

Soldiers check progress of new clinic in Hatamia

**Story and photos by Sgt. Jason Mikeworth
207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment**

HATAMIA — Civil Affairs Soldiers from 1st Corps Support Command inspected the construction site of the new Hatamia Health Clinic in Hatamia.



Lt. Col. Ronald Kirby from 1st COSCOM Civil Affairs inspects progress on the U.S.-funded Hatamia Health Clinic. The clinic is expected to serve nearly 20,000 when it is completed.

The visit was to check on the progress of the new, U.S.-funded facility, expected to serve about 20,000 people when it is completed.

"The village of Hatamia is only about 3,000 to 4,000 people," said Lt. Col. Ronald Kirby, the assistant deputy chief of staff for the G-5 section of 1st COSCOM. "A clinic it should serve the entire area within a six-mile radius."

The clinic, designed



Lt. Col. Ronald Kirby and Staff Sgt. Rallie Anderson of 1st COSCOM are surrounded by children during an inspection at the new Hatamia Health Clinic construction site.

to help both the Iraqi population and U.S. forces, is moving along smoothly, Kirby said.

"Just in the terms of bringing health care to the people and by helping them build a new project aids in the health benefits of the Iraqi people.

"Knowing that the money to build this project came from

U.S. forces gives goodwill and a good impression of our desire to see them have a better way of life and an increased quality of life."

"One of the objectives of any project we do is to put Iraqis back to work, and allowing all local work to be put on the project just puts more money back into the economy," Kirby said. Another goal of these types of projects is to establish a better relationship between the local Iraqis and the U.S. troops in the area. By increasing their quality of life, it gives the people of Iraq a reason to put their country back together, said Kirby.

Completion of a village water distribution network in Diyala Province on Oct. 2 will provide water to 365 homes.

600 Iraqi school children will receive a better education in a newly refurbished six-classroom school in Thi Qar Province.

Iraqis are safer in Maysan Province with the completion of a permanent vehicle checkpoint.



Heroes of the Week

New training center named for slain Soldier

Story and photo by
Sgt. Jason Mikeworth
207th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA — The Combat Medic Training Center at Logistical Support Area Anaconda was renamed on Sept. 14 to the Sgt. 1st Class Tricia L. Jameson Combat Medic Training Center to honor the fallen Soldier of the 313th Medical Company (Ground Ambulance) of the 44th Medical Command.

Jameson, who had been in Iraq for only about two weeks, was killed July 14 when an improvised explosive device (IED) detonated near the Humvee she was riding in as she attempted to reach a group of Marines to provide medical aid after they had been struck by an earlier IED.

"This training center is exactly what Sergeant Jameson was all about," said Capt. Robert Miller, the executive officer and field medical officer of the 313th MC.



Brig. Gen. Elder Granger, commander of the 44th MEDCOM, and Maj. Gen. George W. Weightman, commander of the U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School and Fort Sam Houston, Texas, dedicate the Combat Medic Training Center at LSA Anaconda to Sgt. 1st Class Tricia L. Jameson. She was killed in action July 14.

"She was not only a medic, but she was a teacher. Sharing and teaching others knowledge and caring for Soldiers was what she was about."

Miller worked closely with his fellow

Nebraska Army National Guard Soldier for many years. Both had worked as instructors at the Regional Training Institute at Camp Ashland, Neb., to train Soldiers from seven states.

Miller recalled times when Jameson would drive 50 miles to his house to ensure he had all the necessary equipment to teach.

"When it came to organization, managing and working with Soldiers, her patience was phenomenal," Miller said. "She was probably the easiest person in the world to get along with."

Jameson was a passionate, selfless teacher, said Miller. He said he hopes these traits will carry on as the legacy of Jameson through the school.

"It's sad that some things like this have to happen for things this good to come of them," Miller said, "but to give a training center with Sergeant Jameson's name on it is fantastic."



Coalition Partners



Korean troops celebrate a year in Iraq

Maj. Gen. Cheong, commanding general of the South Korean Zaytun Division, greets Kurdish Zaytun Regional Government President Massoud Barzani, who visited Camp Zaytun on its first anniversary of deployment, Sept. 22.



Courtesy photo



Heroes of the Week

Iraqi Army Soldiers graduate commando course

Story and photo by
Spc. Derek Del Rosario

Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE JUSTICE — Waving rifles in the air, Iraqi Army Soldiers sang cadences and jubilantly marched in circles to celebrate during a ceremony commemorating their graduation from the first commando company basic course Sept. 21.

More than 100 Soldiers of the Iraqi Army's 1st Brigade Headquarters, 6th Division endured 16 weeks of intense training separated in three stages, including six weeks of basic training.

The Soldiers learned skills like map reading and weapons familiarization; four weeks of special training where they conducted checkpoint, convoy and raid operations; and six weeks of high-level training, giving them the opportunity to sharpen their skills handling ambushes and fire fights in a civilian environment.

Iraqi Army Brig. Gen. Jalil Kalaf, 1st Bde., 6th Div. commander, said the Soldiers are well trained. The course was

taught and supervised entirely by Iraqi trainers, he added.

"The Soldiers received house-to-house combat training," Jalil said. "It is very high physical and intense training that prepares the Soldiers to counter terrorism." The graduation ceremony included demonstrations of some of the course training.

Spectators were treated to live exercises of Soldiers practicing unarmed close engagement combat, establishing fighting positions, setting up explosive devices, and even showcasing their physical abilities by jumping through hoops of fire and crawling under barbed wire.

The training and increased responsibility of the Iraqi Army plays an important role in establishing a safe and secure environment — an area where Jalil says his brigade has made much progress.

"There has been improvement over the last six months. We received an area of operations in February, and we plan to expand that area," Jalil said.

With such progress being made, Jalil foresees a brighter future for a democratic Iraq. "It raises my morale and gives me



Iraqi Soldiers grapple in hand-to-hand combat training demonstrating skills learned at the Iraqi Army's first commando basic course.

more confidence to see these Soldiers graduate. The more trained Soldiers we have, the more we can fight terror."

Iraqi Army takes over FOB Lima responsibilities

By II Marine
Expeditionary Force
(Forward) Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU — A ceremony celebrating the transfer of Forward Operating Base Lima to Iraqi Security Forces was held Sept. 28 at the Karbala Sports Stadium in Karbala.

Iraqi Police and Army commanders and Iraqi government representatives along with Lt.

Col. James Oliver, commander of the 1st Battalion, 198th Armored Brigade, attended the ceremony transferring local security responsibilities to the Iraqi Police and the 4th Brigade, 8th Division, Greater Iraqi Army.

The 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery, represented by Oliver and formerly stationed at FOB Lima, has assisted the people of Karbala since mid-January, providing security and

infrastructure support. Sixty-eight projects, totaling approximately \$21.5 million, have and continue to improve the city of Karbala.

The projects include water, sanitation, education, electrical, medical and humanitarian aid. FOB Lima now belongs to the city of Karbala, and city officials will decide how to best utilize the property.

The battalion has relocated to other bases throughout the

155th Brigade Combat Team's area of operations. Sufficient forces remain available to offer any assistance requested by the Iraqi Security Forces in control of Karbala and the surrounding area.

The 2nd Bn., 114th Field Artillery is a U.S. Army unit assigned to the 155th BCT serving with the II Marine Expeditionary Force (FWD), in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Zaytun Vocational Training Center is graduating 158 Iraqis who completed programs in basic construction, food preparation, engine repair and maintenance.

Iraqi media advisors are conducting a media symposium for the improvement of media operation in Salah Ad Din Province held at the Provincial Joint Coordination Center.

Iraq's Prime Minister hails opening of Joint Staff College

By Sgt. Lorie Jewell

Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq Public Affairs

AR RUSTAMIYAH — The opening of the Iraqi Joint Staff College is a strong step in the march to democracy, Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari told a crowd of students and high-level Iraqi and Coalition leaders at a Sept. 27 ceremony marking the college's new beginning.

The college was originally formed in 1928 but closed with the dissolution of the Iraqi Army in 2003. With assistance from NATO Training Mission – Iraq (NTM-I) and the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq (MNSTC-I), the college is experiencing a “new birth,” Iraqi officials said.

Jaafari encouraged students to take advantage of the opportunity to glean from the knowledge and experience of nations that have preceded Iraq in developing democratic governments.

“Today, the joint staff college is coming back to life,” said Iraqi Staff Brig. Sami, the school's commandant.

Officers must meet strict qualifications in order to attend, including military experience, proper education and “absolute loyalty to country,” said Sami. Candidates must also do well on an entrance examination. The college is open to students from all regions and ethnicities, he added.

The college is separated into two cours-

es, with 50 students attending the junior course for seven and a half months and 40 in the senior course, which takes nine and a half months to complete. The first group of students, which started classes this week, includes at least one woman.

Besides military and leadership topics, the curriculum includes classes in human rights, social sciences and international law. Students also study English and computer skills.

NTM-I assisted with forming the cur-

riculum and conducted a 15-week “train-the-trainers” course earlier this year that produced 24 Iraqi instructors who will teach at the staff college.

Applicants for the trainer course had to demonstrate an ability to teach and an understand-

ing of democratic principles. They also had to be able to speak English or another language and be a college graduate.

Nine Iraqi colonels and 15 lieutenant colonels were selected for the course by a committee made up of representatives from Iraq's Ministry of Defense and the Joint Headquarters. The course included more than 300 hours of lectures and 120 hours of exercises, divided into five sections: International relations, security and political organizations; national policy,



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Lorie Jewell

Iraqi Gen. Babakir, chief of Iraq's Armed Forces, accompanies Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari into the new Iraqi Joint Staff College for the opening ceremony.



Courtesy photo

Gen. Babakir, Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari and Secretary General of NATO Jaap de Hoop Scheffer participate in the ribbon cutting.

Respected council member loses life, legacy lives on

By Multinational Force-Northwest Public Affairs

MOSUL — Nafaa Aziz, one of the most active members of the Ninevah Provincial Council was killed in a drive-by shooting, along with her son, in Mosul on Monday.

Aziz chaired the Human Rights Committee and also

participated in the Health Committee. She was an advocate for human rights, ensuring humane treatment. She visited many detention facilities and was the first council member to visit the division jail in Mosul.

Considered one of the most vocal council members, Aziz participated in radio call-in shows and televised events, and

spoke often during weekly council meetings. She not only addressed human rights issues but also issues on security, food distribution, education and business. She used her influence to further the cause for women's rights in the province including initiating a project to start the construction of the Mosul Women's Center.

Aziz hoped the center would empower women of all backgrounds. There, women could receive vocational training, career counseling, child care, basic medical care, health and fitness training, and a safe haven for those leaving dangerous domestic situations. The construction and vision for the center continues.

Iraqi Security Forces operations this week in Iraq

Iraqi Army officers train in command post exercise at Iraqi headquarters

By Staff Sgt. Julie Nicolov
Multi-National Corps - Iraq
Public Affairs

Members of the Iraqi Ground Forces Headquarters Command (IGFC) participated in a Coalition-led command post exercise (CPX) at Camp Victory Sept. 25 and 26.

"We are going to be very good officers for the Iraqi Army and the people as well as to the Coalition Forces," said the IGFC commander, a brigadier general who chooses to remain anonymous for security reasons.

The exercise was the second in a series of training opportunities designed to help the IGFC prepare for upcoming events, such as the referendum and elections.

"The training objectives were focused on battle tracking in preparation for the upcoming referendum, staff coordination



The IGFC mission statement is displayed for Arabic and English speakers alike during their monthly command post exercise on Camp Victory, Sept. 26. The CPX was the second in a series designed to prepare the Iraqi Army officers to command the IA divisions without supervision from Coalition Forces.

and interaction and their ability to conduct continuous operations while managing administrative and logistical requirements," said Col. Thomas McCool, IGFC military training team leader.

The IGFC staff officers are also learning valuable lessons that will help them to ultimately take full command of the

Iraqi Army divisions.

"In the future, the IGFC headquarters will be in charge of all of its divisions. We will be the ones to feed all of these skills to the divisions. This is a very good and valuable opportunity from Multi-National Corps - Iraq," the IGFC commander said.

In addition to the monthly exercises, CF liaisons conduct daily training with the IGFC staff sections, focusing on operational, administrative and logistical duties.

"We conduct individual and collective training daily," McCool said. "A mini CPX is conducted every Thursday."

All the training seems to be paying off for the Iraqi Army staff officers.

"We have learned quite a few things from the training teams, especially the improvement of the use of computers and how to receive and pass along information. It used to take much longer," the IGFC commander said.

The next exercise is scheduled for mid-November.

Task Force Baghdad team brings aid to local residents

By 2nd Brigade Combat Team
Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — Soldiers from Task Force Baghdad's 2nd Brigade Combat Team and the 448th Civil Affairs Battalion conducted a humanitarian aid mission in the 9 Nissan district Sept. 28.

The Soldiers distributed supplies such as pens, pencils, notebooks, backpacks, shoes, toys, personal hygiene items, antibiotics and other medical aids at the 9 Nissan District Advisory Council building.

This humanitarian mission was especially significant to the Soldiers involved because the recipients of the supplies were



U.S. Army photo

With their new supplies, children wait to be seen by Task Force Baghdad medical personnel during a humanitarian mission to the 9 Nissan district.

all Iraqi special-needs children.

"Some of the children suffered from injuries, and some were born with handicaps and other medical conditions," said Capt. Todd R. Olsen, 448th Civil Affairs Battalion team leader. "[They] seemed very happy and enjoyed receiving gifts from Coalition Forces."

Following the handout of supplies, Capt. Antonio Ortiz, assigned to the 26th Forward Support Battalion, a medical logistics planner and former enlisted medic, addressed some of the children's medical issues and parents' concerns.

By day's end, the team of Soldiers had seen 70 parents and children.

Taji Military Training Base recently graduated 102 students from the Iraqi Army Engineer School.



This week in Multi-National Corps - Iraq

Coalition Operations: a week in review

By Staff Sgt. Julie Nicolov
Multi-National Corps – Iraq
Public Affairs

Coalition Forces in Iraq are working diligently to help the citizens of Iraq create a democratic and peaceful nation by detaining anti-Iraqi forces, rebuilding infrastructure and turning over formerly Coalition occupied military bases to Iraqi Security Forces (ISF).

This week in Iraq, more than 230 insurgents were detained or killed.

One of the most notorious of those insurgents was the second most wanted al Qaeda terrorist in Iraq, Abu Azzam.

Azzam, the al Qaeda in Iraq Emir of Baghdad was killed by Iraqi Security and Coalition Forces during a raid in Baghdad Sept. 25.

He was the operational commander for al Qaeda in Iraq and was responsible for the increase of violent attacks in the Baghdad since April 2005.

“By taking Abu Azzam off

the street, another close associate of Zarqawi, we have dealt another serious blow to Zarqawi’s terrorist organization,” said Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, Multi-National Force-Iraq spokesperson.

In addition to fighting insurgency, Coalition Forces continue to help Iraq’s citizens take control of their nation by helping them secure their streets for the upcoming referendum and rebuild their infrastructure for their futures.

Since Operation Restoring Rights began in Tall Afar last month, more than 24,000 citizens have returned to the city. The operation was designed to weed out insurgents who would have prevented the citizens from voting Oct. 15.

Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces will stay in the city to maintain a safe environment and to help rebuild the city’s infrastructure.

Members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers met with Iraqi government representatives in Mosul to discuss reconstruction priorities in Tall



Iraqi Soldiers eat lunch during a break at the Command Post Exercise on Camp Victory, Baghdad Sept. 26. The exercise is designed to prepare Iraqi Army officers to lead their divisions without Coalition supervision.

Afar Sept. 25. Government officials are most concerned about schools, sources of drinking water and power facilities.

The following day, members of the Iraqi Transitional Government toured reconstruction projects in Tall Afar.

More than \$36 million has been allocated for 49 construction projects.

In western Iraq, Forward Operating Base Lima was

turned over to Iraqi Police and the 4th Brigade, 8th Division, Greater Iraqi Army during a ceremony at the Karbala Sports Stadium Sept. 28.

The battalion has relocated to other bases throughout the 155th Brigade Combat Team’s area of operations. Sufficient forces remain available to offer any assistance requested by the ISF in control of Karbala and the surrounding area.

Renovations will be completed this week on the Ministry of Environment Building in Adhamiyah, Baghdad Province. This \$4.4 million project started in August 2004 and employed an average of 126 Iraqi workers. The building was destroyed by fire and looted after the war. The reconstruction on the building included painting interior and exterior walls, plumbing, installation of electrical conduits, carpentry and sewage renovations.

Multi-National Division - North Central will support Diyala Provincial Joint Coordination Center referendum rehearsal exercise in Baqubah on Saturday. The center staff will conduct the final exercise before the vote.

Construction started this week on three rural water supply projects that will benefit 4,250 residents in Hit and Al Jubayl in the Al Anbar Province, with 4.2 million liters per day. Each project consists of one, 1,440 cubic meters-per-day compact water unit, all accessories and associated facilities and costs \$139,000.

Substation expansion benefits six million people

Story and photo by Maj. Jim Hawkins
Gulf Region Division U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

BAGHDAD — A substation expansion project in Mosul will increase the existing capacity of the 400 kV Mosul substation to allow for an additional 400 kV transmission line between Mosul and Baghdad.

The Mosul substation expansion is a critical, electric grid system element to increase the amount of available power to the entire country.

The expansion provides the capacity to distribute power more reliably, thereby affecting six million people.

The project serves a dual purpose. It will efficiently distribute an estimated 2000 MW of power from the northern to the central regions, and it will allow connection and transmission of power from Turkey.

This project has the potential for increased transmission capacity of 2000 MW and the addition of an average of two hours of power nationwide.

Work is estimated to complete in about one year at an estimated cost of \$29 million, and will be performed by Iraqi subcontractors.



The Mosul substation expansion project.

The expanded substation will be operated and maintained by the Iraqi Ministry of Electricity. Included in the work will be operations and maintenance training and one year of spare parts.

The project is part of an ongoing effort by the Minister of Electricity, Dr. Mohsen Shlash, to continue to improve Iraq's electrical power infrastructure.

Station Renovation



Baghdad Central Train Station was built by the British in 1954. It offered telegraph services, printing presses, a bank, a post office, shopping, a saloon and restaurants. In recent years it fell into disrepair. Al Munshed Group of Baghdad is in charge of renovating the station. To date 42,085 man days have been spent on this 370-day \$5.9 million project. It was started on Nov. 30, 2004, with required completion



of Dec. 5, 2005. Centralized air conditioning has been installed and the four elevators replaced. Work is ahead of schedule with 70 percent completed. About 175 Iraqis are employed on the project daily. Current work includes removing damaged mosaic tiles, installing aluminum partitions, repairing walls, plastering damaged ceiling and walls for two offices at the passenger platform and installing new aluminum windows.

Iraqi leaders visit Al Qadisiyah Province school

Story and photo by Pat Jones
Gulf Region Southern District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

BASE CAMP ADDER — The Iraqi Minister of Civil Society Organization and the Director General of Education for the Al Qadisiyah Province visited an Al Wahada elementary school recently as part of a transitional government outreach program to show the central government is interested in issues at the provincial level.

Emad Al Safy and Dr. Salman Al-Sheikh Bagir toured the first floor of the Malak Al Ashtar school to get a first-hand look at what was being done to the building, and to see the quality of the work.

After the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime, local residents severely damaged the school as they took out years of frustration and anger on the building that carried the name of the fallen dictator. Since then, the school was renamed and renovations were begun.

The school is in one of the poorest neighborhoods of the province and hosts 1,200 children in two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, said Lt. Col. John Lofstedt, deputy district engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Southern District.

Lofstedt said the project was initially awarded to Al Taathed Co. Ltd. for \$62,000 for a partial rehabilitation of the school, but was later increased \$40,000 to complete the rest of the building.

When complete, the school will have new flooring, plumbing, electrical works, doors and frames, windows, ceiling fans, water coolers and air conditioning. The schoolyard will also have a reconstructed perimeter wall.



Ali, a contractor for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, shows Dr. Dalman Al Sheikh Bagir, director general of education for the Al Qadisiyah province, photos of the school before rehabilitation.

To date, GRS has completed 317 of its projects and has 46 ongoing. Of the completed schools, 40 were labeled “mud schools.” These schools were literally constructed with mud and had earthen floors and cane or thatch roofs.

A 2004 report released by the Iraq Ministry of Education (MoE) emphasizes the need for rebuilding the educational infrastructure.

Nearly one third of all primary schools in the country lack water supply and nearly 50 percent do without restrooms or washrooms, according to the report. Additionally, there are not enough desks,

chairs or classrooms. The majority of schools need some form of restoration because of crumbling walls, bullet holes, broken windows and leaking roofs.

The Iraq Education Survey was carried out by the Iraqi government and covered every educational institution in the country. In all, the survey covered over 20,000 schools and institutes. It revealed that of the 4.3 million children registered in Iraq’s primary schools, 2.4 million are boys and 1.9 million are girls, similar to pre-war ratios. The enrollment of girls was lower than boys in every grade and in every governorate.

An estimated 60 percent of Iraq’s population is now illiterate, and at least 25 percent of primary school-age children do not go to school, according to World Bank statistics. It is estimated that half of children do not go on to secondary school. In rural areas the numbers are even higher. Up to half of girls never attend school, according to the MoE.

The result of decades of wars, sanctions and under-funding, thousands of school facilities lack the basics necessary to provide children with a decent education. A vast majority of schools are in shambles and many of the existing schools run two or three shifts just to accommodate the number of students.

While the nearly 400 school projects will not solve all the educational problems for this region, it is a starting point and one that gives many of the residents in this impoverished section hope for their children’s future.

“The residents are very happy [about the school’s reconstruction] and are always willing to help,” the contractor Ali said through an interpreter. “The workers are also very happy to find work close to home.”

Construction started on two electrical substation projects. The \$3.7 million project in Al Amarah, Maysan Province rehabilitates, extends and rebuilds an existing 33/11kV substation and its associated control building. The \$2.5 million project in Al Mutanabi, Najaf Province rehabilitates the existing 33kV/11kV substation and includes construction of a new control building, switchgear and transformers. Approximately 40,000 people will get their electricity through each of these substations, with better reliability, additional service to new housing developments and increased power to each home as the number of appliances in each home increases.



Photo courtesy of Multi-National Division Central-South

Iraqi Police in Babil, Diwaniyah and Quadisiyah provinces received new vehicles, weapons, ammunition and uniforms. The vehicles and police equipment have been sponsored by Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq and Multi-National Division Central-South.

Iraqis taking the lead



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.

Residents of Tall Afar wave to U.S. Army troops.



U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Alan D. Monyelle

An Iraqi child appears to enjoy the freedom of everyday living in a youth center in Tall Afar. Iraqi Army Security Forces with assistance from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment and an 82nd Airborne Division unit are providing security for the region to disrupt insurgent safe havens and to clear weapons cache sights in the area.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. David Kobi

An Iraqi Soldier hands out school supplies at an elementary school in Baghdad recently.